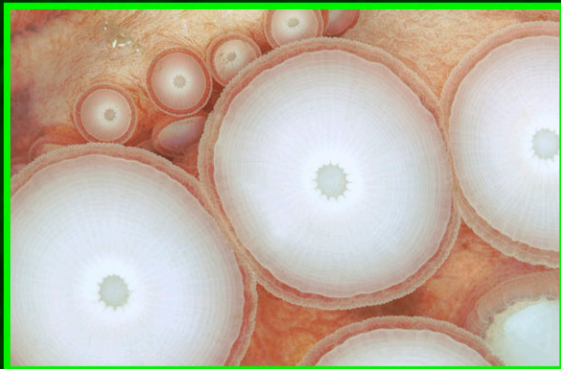


Freaky Features

in Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary



Turn the card over to see what it is!

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Moon Jellyfish

The squat, milky moon jellyfish looks like an umbrella. It has short tentacles and four "arms" that surround its mouth.

Instead of trapping prey with its tentacles, it catches plankton on the sticky under side of its umbrella. The food is then carried to the edge of the umbrella by the arms which carry food to the mouth.

Octopus Suckers

The giant Pacific octopus can often be seen in local tidepools. The octopus arms can spread up to 10 feet across, but may also be much smaller. An octopus uses its suckers to hold its prey until it can bite into it with its beak. The octopus then floods its prey with digestive juice, sucks in the partially digested tissues and discards any shells. Octopi only live about 5 years. An octopus can change color rapidly using specialized cells.

Basket Stars

The basket star is a sea star related to the brittle star. It has arms with many branches and branchlets. When extended into a current, these branches capture floating food particles. Once a food item is captured, the branchlet moves the food item to the underside where the mouth is located. Basket stars often live on exposed rocks underwater and can reach a length of up to 30 inches.

Sea Caves along Cape Flattery

Formed by waves pushing into cracks and weaknesses in coastal cliffs, sea caves are home to several kinds of marine birds and hundreds of species of invertebrates (animals without backbones). Kayakers with advanced skills and safety equipment go inside caves during calm seas to explore, often finding tiny beaches with overhanging rainforest vegetation and hidden waterfalls on the other side.